

Message Text

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67

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CEQ-01 CIAE-00 ERDA-05 COME-00

DODE-00 EB-07 EPA-01 INR-07 IO-13 L-03 NSF-01 NSC-05

NSAE-00 PM-04 USIA-06 OES-06 SS-15 SP-02 INT-05 FEA-01

HEW-04 H-02 PA-01 PRS-01 /106 W

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R 301302Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6559

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DEPT PASS EPA AND CEQ; ALSO FOR HEW, INTERIOR, AGRICULTURE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SENV, PGOV, AR

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATION IN ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT

1. ONE OF THE MOST SUBSTANTIAL REORGANIZATIONS TAKEN TO DATE BY THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT WHICH ASSUMED POWER IN ARGENTINA ON MARCH 24 HAS BEEN IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL FIELD.

2. AS DEPT AWARE, PERONISTS HAD CREATED A STATE SECRETARIAT FOR NATURAL RESOURCES AND HUMAN ENVIRONMENT IN THE ECONOMY MINISTRY, AND THIS SECRETARIAT WAS THE CHIEF SPOKESMAN AND ACTION AGENCY FOR THE GOVERNMENT ON ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS.

3. THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT HAS BROKEN UP THIS SECRETARIAT COMPLETELY. MINERALS (PREVIOUSLY AN UNDERSECRETARIAT) HAS BEEN PROMOTED TO THE STATE SECRETARY LEVEL. HYDRAULIC RESOURCES (AND ANDERSECRETARIAT) HAS BEEN MOVED INTACT TO THE TRANSPORT AND PUBLIC WORKS SECRETARIAT (ALSO ECONOMY MINISTRY). THE RENEWABLE RESOURCES UNDERSECRETARIAT HAS BECOME THE RENEWABLE BATURAL RESOURCES UNDERSECRETARIAT OF THE SECRETARIAT OF

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AGRICULTURE AND LIVESTOCK (ECONOMY MINISTRY). (THE NATIONAL

DIRECTORATE FOR WILDLIFE IS PART OF THIS ORGANIZATION.)

4. THE UNDERSECRETARIAT FOR HUMAN ENVIRONMENT HAS BEEN ABOLISHED, AND AN UNDERSECRETARIAT FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING CREATED INSTEAD. THIS NEW ORGANIZATION HAS BEEN MADE PART OF THE SECRETARIAT OF TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC WORKS OF THE ECONOMY MINISTRY. AN UNDERSECRETARY HAS YET TO BE NAMED TO FILL THIS POST.

5. CONTINUING UNCHANGED TO DATE IS THE BASIC ORGANIZATION OF THE SOCIAL WELFARE MINISTRY WHICH HAS, UNDER THE STATE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC HEALTH, CERTAIN RESPONSIBILITIES OF A REGULATORY NATURE EQUIVALENT TO SOME OF THOSE OF EPA AND FDA.

6. COMMENT. TO SOME EXTENT, THE NEW GOVERNMENT HAS DEEMPHASIZED THE ENVIRONMENT THRU THESE ACTIONS. THERE IS CONSIDERABLE PRESTIGE AND INFLUENCE AT THE STATE SECRETARY LEVEL, WHICH IS ONE STEP REMOVED AT THE UNDERSECRETARY LEVEL. ON THE OTHER HAND, ONE MUST RECALL THAT THE PERONISTS, WHILE GIVING GREAT LIP-SERVICE TO ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS, ORGANIZING BIG MEETINGS, ERECTING LARGE "SILENCE IS HEALTH" SIGNS IN BUENOS AIRES, ETC., REALLY DID VERY LITTLE IN CONCRETE TERMS TO PROTECT OR IMPROVE THE ARGENTINE ENVIRONMENT. IT IS BARELY POSSIBLE THAT THE NEW GOVERNMENT DESPITE THE DOWNGRADING, MAY TACKLE SUCH PROBLEMS IN A MORE SERIOUS, ALBEIT MORE QUIET, MANNER AND BEGIN TO PUT SOME TEETH INTO ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACTIONS. TIME WILL TELL.
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